AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A payout tube for a storage container, the payout tube comprising:

an elongated conduit with a flexible portion ~~being~~ placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion ~~being~~ is exterior to the container, said flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The payout tube of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 1 degree to about 120 degrees.

5. (Original) The payout tube of claim 4, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 5 to about 90 degrees.

6. (Previously Presented) The payout tube of claim 1, wherein the storage container includes a continuous length of material comprising communication wires and cables, building wires and cables, electrical wires, steel strands, tire cords and cables, ropes, and tubing.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The payout tube of claim [7] 1, wherein the number and size of slots are relative to the desired flexibility and required strength of the payout tube.

9. (Currently Amended) The payout tube of claim [7] 1, wherein the shape of the slots are substantially circular, rectangular, square, triangular, polygonal, or a combination thereof.

10. (Currently Amended) The payout tube of claim [7] 1, wherein the slots are located along the entire length of the flexible portion or only a part thereof.

11. (Currently Amended) The payout tube of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion comprises a plurality of independent and discrete corrugations.

12. (Previously Presented) The payout tube of claim 11, wherein the corrugations are located along the entire length of the flexible portion or only a part thereof.

13. (Currently Amended) A device for removing a continuous length of material from a storage container, the device comprising:

an elongated conduit with a flexible portion ~~being~~ placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion ~~being~~ is exterior to the container, said flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Original) The device of claim 13, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 1 degree to about 120 degrees.

17. (Original) The device of claim 16, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 5 to about 90 degrees.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) The device of claim [18] 13, wherein the slots are located along the entire length of the flexible portion or only a part thereof.

20. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 13, wherein the flexible portion comprises a plurality of independent and discrete corrugations.

21. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 20, wherein the corrugations are located along the entire length of the flexible portion or only a part thereof.

22. (Currently Amended) A storage container for a continuous length of material, the container comprising:

a payout tube having an elongated conduit with a flexible portion ~~being~~ placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion ~~being~~ is exterior to the container, said flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots.

23. (Currently Amended) A system for removing a continuous length of material from a storage container, the system comprising a device comprising an elongated conduit with a flexible portion through which the continuous length material is removed wherein said flexible portion is placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion is placed exterior to the container, said flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for removing a continuous length of material from a storage container, the method comprising:

providing a payout tube having an elongated conduit with a flexible portion ~~being~~ placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion being exterior to the container, the flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots; and

removing a portion of the continuous length or material from the storage container through the payout tube.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24, including providing the payout tube in a wall of the storage container.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the flexible portion of the payout tubes bends towards the direction at which the continuous length material enters the payout tube.

27. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the flexible portion bends or flexes in an angle ranging from about 1 degree to about 120 degrees.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the flexible portion bends or flexes in an angle ranging from about 5 to about 90 degrees.

29. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the continuous length of material does not substantially kink or tangle while being removed from the storage container.

30. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a continuous length of material, the method comprising:

packaging a continuous length of material in a storage container, the container comprising a payout tube having an elongated conduit with a flexible portion ~~being~~ placed in an interior of the container and a remaining portion ~~being~~ is exterior to the container, the flexible portion including a plurality of independent and discrete slots; and

removing the continuous length of material from the storage container through the payout tube.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the flexible portion of the payout tubes bends towards the direction at which the continuous length of material enters the payout tube.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 1 to about 120 degrees.

33. (Original) The method of claim 32, wherein the flexible portion can bend or flex in an angle ranging from about 5 to about 90 degrees.